

Attachment #2

**Strategic Priority 2 - Homes and
Housing Options**



Strategy Priority: Homes and Housing Options 2025: 1st Semi-Annual Status Report

Clear the way for all types of homes needed by people today and tomorrow

Objectives and Outcomes	Status	Comments/issues
Objective 1: Implement policies and procedures to further support the delivery and maintenance of homes that meet our community’s diverse needs.		
Strategic Outcome: - More Homes Near Transit		
22 nd St Station Area Bold Vision		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reGENERATE: A Long Range Vision for the Neighbourhood Around 22nd Street SkyTrain Station was endorsed by Council on December 16, 2024. Staff resources approved for 2024 hired and supporting work. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present an implementation work plan to Council. Amend Official Community Plan to align with the Vision. Area based infrastructure and amenity planning is underway and being integrated into City-wide Financing Growth Strategy. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff capacity and competing interests, especially supporting implementation of and alignment with the new provincial housing legislation. <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Work on implementing the Vision is proceeding.</i>
New Provincial Housing Legislation: Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Areas		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit Oriented Area Bylaw adopted June 24, 2024. Zoning Bylaw amended to align parking regulations with new legislation adopted June 24, 2024. Guide to TOD in New Westminister completed/available online. TOD Area mapping published on CityViews. Staff resources approved for 2024 hired and supporting work. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend Official community Plan to align with new legislation. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic regulatory environment. Further work required to fully implement Transit Oriented Development Areas will take additional time (financing growth, design guidelines), making application evaluation more challenging in the meantime. Staff capacity and competing interests. <p>Key messages:</p>

- *Work to update the Official Community Plan to reflect new provincial housing legislation is proceeding on track to meet the Province's 2025 timeline.*

Strategic Outcome:

- Infill Housing

New Provincial Housing Legislation: Small Scale Multi-unit Housing (SSMUH)

- Progress to date:**
- Zoning Amendment Bylaw adopted June 24, 2024 creating new RD-1 zoning enabling duplexes with secondary suites.
 - Application to the Province for an extension for properties in Queensborough was approved, extending the compliance deadline to May 4, 2029.
 - Staff resources approved for 2024 hired and leading work.
- Next steps:**
- Amend the Official Community Plan to align with new legislation.
- Risk:**
- Province stance on City's implementation of legislation is pending.
 - Dynamic regulatory environment.
- Key messages:**
- *Work to update the Official Community Plan to reflect new provincial housing legislating is proceeding on track to meet the Province's 2025 timeline.*

Infill Housing Program

- Progress to date:**
- Work Plan approved by Council on May 27, 2024 followed by launch of Be Heard project page.
 - Consultant retained to develop the program.
 - Staff resources approved for 2024 hired and supporting work.
- Next steps:**
- Community and other focused consultation.
 - Review Provincial and Federal pre-approved design catalogues.
- Risk:**
- Dynamic regulatory environment.
- Key messages:**
- *Work is underway on this Housing Accelerator Fund project, with the new infill housing program anticipated to be adopted in summer 2026.*

Townhouse Acceleration Program

- Progress to date:**
- Work Plan approved by Council on May 27, 2024 followed by launch of Be Heard project page.
 - Consultant retained to develop the program.
 - Staff resources approved for 2024 hired and supporting work.
- Next steps:**

- Community and other focused consultation.
 - Present draft zoning and Official Community Plan changes to Council.
- Risk:**
- Dynamic regulatory environment.
 - Staff capacity and competing interests.
 - Timeline commitments under Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) require completion of changed to the Zoning Bylaw and Official Community Plan to be completed by September 2025.
- Key messages:**
- *Work is underway on this Housing Accelerator Fund project.*

Strategic Outcome:
- Build More Homes Faster

Development Approvals

- Progress to date:**
- By the end of 2024 the City issued building permits for 610 new residential units, and completed development approvals for an additional 396 residential units.
- Next steps:**
- Lower Twelfth Street Area Study is underway with catalyst development project applicants. Evaluation Framework anticipated for Council consideration in mid 2025.
 - Several other high density developments and Master Plans are continuing to proceed, including Columbia Square.
- Risk:**
- Competition amongst all municipalities for limited pool of development approvals staff has impacted the ability to fill positions through end of 2024; however all are filled.
 - Challenging market and “wait and see” response to legislation changes continue to slow development applications and housing construction throughout the region, potentially impacting our ability to meet targets.
- Key messages:**
- *The City continues to advance housing approvals, with a priority on affordable and rental residential projects, as we work to implement provincially legislated changes to housing approvals processes.*

Development Approvals Process Review (DAPR)

- Progress to date:**
- Analysis of findings complete and adopted by Council.
 - Successfully obtained \$150,000 grant from UBCM for assistance in implementation.
 - Implemented a number of readily-achievable process actions to significantly improve processing times.
- Next steps:**
- Hire and onboard remaining Systems staff, including new positions approved as part of the 2025 budget process.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing more detailed guides, checklists and template documents to achieve further improvements in processing times. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff may need to be reallocated from focusing on actioning the next steps of this work to implement new provincial legislation, but new staff resources should offset this issue. <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The new Planning and Development Systems Team is in place and work is underway to implement UBCM grant projects.</i>
E-permitting		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plumbing, Tree, And Site Services permits are online. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff anticipate releasing Development Permits, Development Variance Permits, Temporary Use Permits, Heritage Alteration Permits, Demolition Permits, and Building Permits on the online application platform by the end of the year. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff may still need to be reallocated from focusing on this work to implement the new provincial legislation, but new staff resources should offset this issue. <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The implementation phase for many simple permit types is complete and the City is aiming to advance the program to include remaining application types.</i>
Affordable Housing Acceleration Policy		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff resources approved for 2024 hired and leading work. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoning Bylaw amendment to implement Phase One of the program to be considered for adoption by Council on February 10, 2025. The proposed bylaw would allow affordable rental (below and non-market) housing projects to forego rezoning if they meet set criteria. <p>Community information session and targeted consultation on Phase Two of the initiative, which will consider further opportunities to amend the Official Community Plan to increase opportunities for streamlined approvals.</p> <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the project is proceeding as anticipated, the outcomes will be limited to those receiving the required senior government funding, over which the City has no authority. Community concerns surrounding Affordable Housing developments. <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Work is well underway on this Housing Accelerator Fund project. A proposed amendment to the zoning bylaw is anticipated to be presented to Council for adoption in January 2025.</i>

Strategic Outcome:

- Policy Alignment

Housing Division

Progress to date:

- Majority of new Housing Division and related staff approved in 2024 budget have been hired.
- Onboarding and training new staff.

Next steps:

- Hire and onboard remaining housing staff, including new positions approved as part of the 2025 budget process.
- Review current division work plan, which intended to focus on creating/updating housing-related policy that focuses on needs of most vulnerable (e.g. Housing Strategy, Affordable Housing Plan, tenant support, affordable housing approvals, secured market rental), in light of new provincial legislation.

Risk:

- Competition amongst all municipalities for limited pool of municipal planning staff may impact ability to complete build-out of division.

Key messages:

- *Staffing the new Housing Division is happening as fast as staff resources and municipal-wide competition for the same planning experts allows.*

Inclusionary Housing

Progress to date:

- Research and analysis is largely completed that will inform update of policy.
- Project timelines have been revised to align with overall financing growth work.
- Consultant retained to undertake economic analysis that will inform the development of the program, accounting for current market conditions.
- Staff resources approved for 2024 hired and leading work (positions funded through Housing Accelerator Fund), with consultant support.

Next steps:

- Ongoing review/analysis of implications of provincial legislation related to Inclusionary Zoning regulations/policies.
- Review analysis and discuss potential approaches for policy update to Council.

Risk:

- Research/analysis indicates current market conditions limit ability for private development to fund affordable housing.
- Timeline commitments under Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) require completion of this work by September 2025.

Key messages:

- *Work is underway on this Housing Accelerator Fund project.*

Family Friendly Housing Policy Update

Progress to date:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council endorsed an updated Family Friendly Housing Policy on October 21, 2024. Council adopted a Zoning Bylaw Amendment to implement new policy direction on November 18, 2024. This change increases the number of two and three plus bedrooms required in new developments. • Staff resources approved for 2024 hired and lead work (positions funded through Housing Accelerator Fund), with support from a consultant. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of updated policy through development applications. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -- <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work is complete for this Housing Accelerator Fund initiative to update the Family Friendly Housing Policy.</i>
Official Community Plan Update		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Plan approved by Council on November 4, 2024. • Staff resources approved for 2024 hired and leading work. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community information session and targeted consultation. • Present draft Official Community Plan changes to Council. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic regulatory environment. • Staff capacity and competing interests. • Deadline set by the Province requires the completion of this work by December 2025. • Timeline commitments are dependent on referral to other agencies (e.g. Metro Vancouver, Ministry of Transportation and Transit) <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work is proceeding on track to meet the Province’s 2025 timeline.</i>
<p>Objective 2: Focus inter-governmental collaboration on the creation of homes and providing supports to keep people housed.</p>		
<p>Strategic Outcome: - Addressing Homelessness</p>		
Crises Response Pilot Project (includes Crises Response Team, Operations Support Team, and Policy and Advocacy Team)		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crises Response Team outreach workers are in the field each weekday and through relationship building and trust, connect people experiencing the three crises to faith-based, non-profit and provincial organizations and teams. • Operations Support Team, inclusive of Community Liaison Officers, are in the field each day addressing the impacts of the three crises on residents and businesses, including related to sheltering, open burning, human waste and discarded belongings.

- Policy and Advocacy Team have made presentations to resident and business associations, and are developing relations with faith-based, non-profit and provincial organizations and teams.
- Douglas College has been engaged to undertake an external and independent evaluation of the Crises Response Pilot Project, including related to its effectiveness and transferability. Benchmark information, including through the use of focus groups, has been collected in support of the evaluation.
- C-Can sanitation trailer, with two toilets, two sinks and two showers, has been operationalized. BC Housing is covering the full cost, including for attendant services, and it is averaging about 1,300 visits per month.
- Additional seasonal and temporary shelter capacity has been realized, including 10 extreme weather mats for women and 25 winter shelter beds for men and women.
- Temporary Use Permit has been renewed for the nightly shelter at 502 Columbia Street, and the City and BC Housing are working towards a 20-hour per day model, as an interim step, and a 24-hour per day model as a longer-term step.
- Working with BC Housing on 58 permanent, purpose-designed 24/7 shelter beds, which, when realized, will result in the closure of the shelter beds at 502 Columbia Street.
- Developing a case for support for a Health Connect and Resource Centre, which will meet the needs of the daytime unhoused population, including related to health, hygiene, life skills, leisure, meals, navigation, referrals, etc.
- Launched Communication Strategy, and activated Resident, Government, Faith-Based and Non-Profit, and Business Liaison positions to facilitate two-way communication.

Next steps:

- Continue to identify needs and gaps in facilities, services and supports for people experiencing the three crises, and communicate these to the Policy and Advocacy Team.
- Continue to work towards a 24/7 shelter model at 502 Columbia Street, and finalize a response plan to address externalities.
- Continue to collaborate with faith-based, non-profit and provincial organizations and teams on advocacy activities, and initiative discussions with resident and business associations on advocacy activities.
- Collect information from the three Teams, and provide to Douglas College as part of their external and independent evaluation.
- Engage with indigenous organizations as to the types of housing and supports to best meet the needs of Indigenous people.
- Develop Open Burning Approach and prepare Staff Safety Study.

Risk:

- Staff capacity is impacted through the dedication of time to implement the Crises Response Pilot Project, including related to

		<p>the three Teams, two Working Groups, and ongoing policy and advocacy activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given that this is a pilot project, it will need to change and evolve as new information and learnings become available. <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Pilot project has been staffed-up, and frameworks put in place; and the Crises Response, Operations Support, and Policy and Advocacy Teams are operational and working to advance the project initiatives.</i>
<p>Extreme Weather Planning and Services</p>		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed an Extreme Weather Response Program Plan. Realized 10 extreme weather mats for women and 25 winter shelter beds for men and women. Opened warming centre for unhoused people when temperatures dipped below -4 degrees Celsius. Closed to 30 people used this resource when operational. Distributed toques, gloves and hand warmers to the unhoused as part of the Crises Response Team outreach component. Prepared, updated and distributed the Survival Guide and Food Resources Calendar to the unhoused as part of the Crises Response Team outreach component. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence planning for extreme heat weather, including exploring cooling centres for the unhoused and people living with mental health and substance use issues. Commence planning for extreme cold weather, including related to seasonal and temporary shelter capacity. Creating building regulations to support tenants to stay cool, particularly in older, purpose-built, market rental buildings. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing incidences and severity of extreme weather events put additional pressure on these services. Reliance on public property to provide a location for warming and cooling centres can be challenging, particularly when people have mental health or substance use issues. <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Public ability to warm and cool in extreme weather is a priority of the City and staff continue to advance more, and longer term, solutions.</i>
<p>Strategic Outcome: - Affordable Housing</p>		
<p>Affordable Housing Capital Projects</p>		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project managers hired to advance existing affordable housing capital projects. Staff continue to generally support affordable housing development, including prioritizing response to inquiries,

		<p>applicant’s preparations for senior government funding requests, and development applications.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to evaluate ability to advance this work in light of new legislation. As part of the new Housing Division, resources were intended to be allocated with a key focus on updating affordable housing policy to support this work, as well as to facilitate the progress of development applications through the review process. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These projects require senior government funding to advance, over which the City has no authority. Previously approved projects have been slow to proceed, or have not received funding. Significant staff resources required due to complexity of applications and short turnaround timelines for related funding programs. While the City’s project managers are now supporting advancing existing applications, applicants continue to have limited resources to adequately navigate early project stages. <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The City continues to prioritize all applications for affordable housing, but relies on senior government funding to realize these much needed developments in our community, putting the City behind on targets for these units.</i>
Affordable Housing Leadership Working Group		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intergovernmental group will take a break until spring 2025. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide ongoing updates to working group on work of Policy and Advocacy Team, affordable/supportive/transitional/shelter housing opportunities, to advance these in the city. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intergovernmental capacity to advance work in New Westminister given extent of need throughout region. <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This intergovernmental working group will help advance projects to meet the needs of our most vulnerable residents.</i>
Objective 3: Ambitiously advance climate action strategies that create more resilient homes.		
<p>Strategic Outcome:</p> <p>- Climate Action</p>		
Energy Step Code		<p>Progress to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New standards for Energy and Carbon Step Code prepared and brought forward to Council for consideration; adopted on Jan 1, 2025. <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New standards for Energy and Carbon Step Code to be considered for adoption on Jan 1, 2025.

- Continue to train Building Officials to review higher levels of the step codes for compliance.

Risk:

- Missed opportunities if applicants are not held accountable to meet required bylaw standards.

Key messages:

- *The Building and Climate Action teams will work closely to advance this work to support climate resilience in the community.*

Objective 4: Publicly share our housing successes and challenges to foster an open dialogue with the community in order to provide meaningful engagement.

Strategic Outcome:

- All

Public Messaging on Housing Initiatives

Progress to date:

- Launched a City webpage with messaging and FAQs on provincial legislation.
- City webpages and Be Heard pages updated regularly.
- Interim Housing Needs Report received by Council before December 31, 2024, as required by Provincial legislation.

Next steps:

- Provide update on meeting housing targets in the Provincial Housing Order.
- Update OCP to reflect 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report.
- Improve data collection through new e-permitting process to improve ability to report on housing data.

Risk:

- Meeting housing targets through the Housing Accelerator Fund is required in order to achieve funding.
- Meeting housing targets required by the Housing Target Order.
- Staff capacity and competing interests.
- Dynamic regulatory environment.

Key messages:

- *Opportunities are being identified, developed and implemented to improve City communications to various audiences.*

Public Messaging on Crisis Response Team

Progress to date:

- Project includes communication with the internal staff, public and external agencies. Iterative communications strategy under development, including:
 - At-a-glance flyers outlining where priority populations are able to access meals, shelter beds and other resources.
 - The creation of a business-focused flyer outlining what the Crises Response Pilot Project is, how the Crises Response Team outreach component fits into it, contact information for outreach component, and other useful numbers.
 - Direct outreach with Downtown New Westminster business owners through a door-knocking campaign. More than 60 businesses were visited in fall 2024.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using e-newsletters to distribute information about the Crises Response Pilot Project, including the <i>Citypage</i> and <i>Invest New West</i> e-publications. ○ Coordinating an interdepartmental update on the Biohazard Removal Program, and reminding the public of its availability. ○ Public messaging related to two “Did You Know?” campaigns on social media. One campaign highlighted New Westminster statistics from the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, the other highlighted relevant resources including the Food Resources Calendar and the Survival Guide, as well as the Biohazard Removal Program. ○ Presentations to key community groups such as the Downtown New Westminster Business Improvement Association and the Downtown Residents’ Association ○ Communicating monthly internal updates through designated online City channels (e.g., the Hub). <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop communications assets/materials to support Working Groups. ● Develop communications campaign educating the general public about the Crises Response Pilot Project and people experiencing the three crises. ● Publish video assets to succinctly explain the Crises Response Pilot Project. <p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff capacity for broad communications program. (e.g., there is one part-time communications person who is responsible for managing the communications of this specific project). ● Many advocacy asks require senior government funding to advance, over which the City has no authority, which should be conveyed to the public. ● Ensuring communications strategies are mindful of the various audiences and their respective needs, and to ensure it is minimizing harm as much as possible. <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Opportunities are being identified, developed and implemented to improve City communications to various audiences.</i>
<p>Summary of Progress in 2024</p>	<p>Anticipated progress in Q1 of 2025 and Risks</p>	
<p>New resources approved for 2024 have been largely realized and have enabled signification portions of the Homes and Housing Options strategic priority, which was challenging in light of the new provincial legislation.</p>	<p>The first stage of implementation of new provincial legislation is complete, but a significant amount of detailed work is required across departments to implement the next stages through 2025. Most resources approved in 2024 are now realized. Housing Accelerator Fund projects have been aligned, wherever possible, with provincial legislation implementation work to achieve the most efficient use of resources. Staff resources will continue to need to focus on Housing Fund commitments and provincial legislation implementation. Staff will continue to monitor to determine if there</p>	

are opportunities to advance other priorities in the Homes and Housing Options focus area that have been paused or slowed. In particular, affordable and supportive housing continue to be a concern, as these require senior government funding. Staff anticipates the earliest opportunity will be once the Housing Fund and legislated work is complete.

Financial Implications

All Homes and Housing Options work was carried out through department operating and City capital budgets. New resources for accelerating housing for those with the most need and overall housing approvals, as well as the Crises Response Pilot Project have been secured through the 2024 and 2025 budget allocation processes. The City has received a number of grants to offset the cost of this work.

Interdepartmental Collaboration

The Homes and Housing Options priority is primarily facilitated through the Planning and Development Department, with input from other departments as required. The Crises Response Pilot Project is an interdepartmental initiative with Fire and Rescue, Engineering, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Development, and the Office of the CAO. A new Interdepartmental Steering Committee has been struck to guide implementation of the Provincial Legislation and Housing Accelerator Fund work plan.

Lenses and Foundations - Implications

Each of the initiatives in the Home and Housing Options strategies incorporate the lenses and foundations in different ways: Reconciliation and DEIAR (e.g. 22nd Station First Nations engagement, affordable housing capital projects); Public Engagement (e.g. Ideas Competition for 22nd Station, builder/owner input for infill housing program); Climate Action (energy and zero carbon step codes); Organizational Effectiveness, and Measurement and Monitoring (development approvals streamlining).

In particular, the Crises Response Pilot Project is seeking to advance that work with a strong Reconciliation and DEIAR lens, as well as robust engagement with external service providers, people with lived and living experience, and the general public.

Instructions and Legend:

Strategic Outcome: Homes and Housing Options
Addressing Homelessness: Implement the Homelessness Action Strategy and related initiatives.
Affordable Housing: Collaborate with senior government to facilitate the construction of new affordable housing units.
More Homes Near Transit: Advance planning for transit-oriented development using a climate action lens.
Infill Housing: Allow for diverse housing options in all neighbourhoods of New Westminster.
Build More Homes Faster: Implement a simplified and streamlined development approvals process to get more homes built across the entire housing spectrum, from apartment buildings to laneway homes, while also facilitating amenities and infrastructure to support growth.
Policy Alignment: Update housing policy to protect existing rental housing and maximize delivery of new housing that meets identified needs.
Climate Action: Reduce emissions from new buildings, increased support for the retrofit of existing buildings, and continue designing our city to allow community members to live and move in alignment with climate goals.

Status	Project performance indicators Rating Summary
Green	On Track - The project aligns with all four performance indicators
Yellow	Concerns to address - The project does not align with one or more of the performance indicator which is resulting in or could result in a delay or material impact
Red	Project Impacted - The project does not align with one or more performance indicator which could result in a major delay or inability to complete

Performance Indicator	Description	Rating Status
Budget Variance	Operating and capital budget variances that are linked to action	Green: On or Under budget Yellow: Slightly over budget: - Less than 10% Red: Significantly over budget: - More than 10%
Schedule Variance	The variance between the actual project progress and the planned schedule	Green: On or ahead of schedule Yellow: Slightly behind schedule: - less than 3 Months Red: Significantly behind schedule: - more than 3 months
Scope Compliance	The frequency and impact of changes to the project scope	Green: Fully compliant Yellow: Partial compliance Red: Significant scope deviations
Staffing Adequacy	The extent to which the action has the correct amount of staff with the required skills and resources to effectively drive the project forward	Green: Adequate staff Yellow: Some staffing issues Red: Insufficient staffing